

Timeline of New Hampshire Colony History

1500s



Abenaki dominate the area.



1603



Pring explores Piscataqua River.



1623



The New Hampshire Colony is founded.



1774



Patriots raid Fort William and Mary.



1788

New Hampshire becomes a state.





The Real People

Early Native American peoples came to New Hampshire at least 10,000 years before Europeans came to colonize it. Several groups speaking related languages dominated the region by the 1500s. These included the Pennacook, Winnipiesaukee, and Ossipee peoples. The area groups together became known as the Abenaki. *Abenaki* was a native word meaning “real people.”

Food From the Wild

The various Abenaki tribes had their own customs. But they shared many everyday habits. They built no permanent towns. They instead moved from place to place and set up winter and summer villages. They often returned to the same general areas. The Abenaki made hunting a central part of life. Abenaki men used bows and arrows or short wooden spears to bring down deer and moose.

A hunter prepares to bring down a moose from his canoe.





Abenaki fish traps were shaped so fish could swim in, but not make their way out.

The Abenaki also used traps to snare smaller game such as raccoon, rabbit, quail, and turkeys. Boys learned to hunt by chasing down these small animals. The area's many lakes and waterways provided great amounts of fish. The Abenaki built wooden fish traps. They also used spears and nets to catch shad and salmon. Their excellent birchbark canoes helped them add to the catch.

Abenaki Farming

Women tapped maple trees for sap (syrup) in the spring. They also gathered wild plants such as blackberries and wild onions during the warm months. Some Abenaki women kept small farms. They grew beans, squash, and maize (corn). Abenaki farmers ground up unused fish parts for plant food and made farming tools from wood or clamshells. The girls learned how to farm and cook from their mothers.

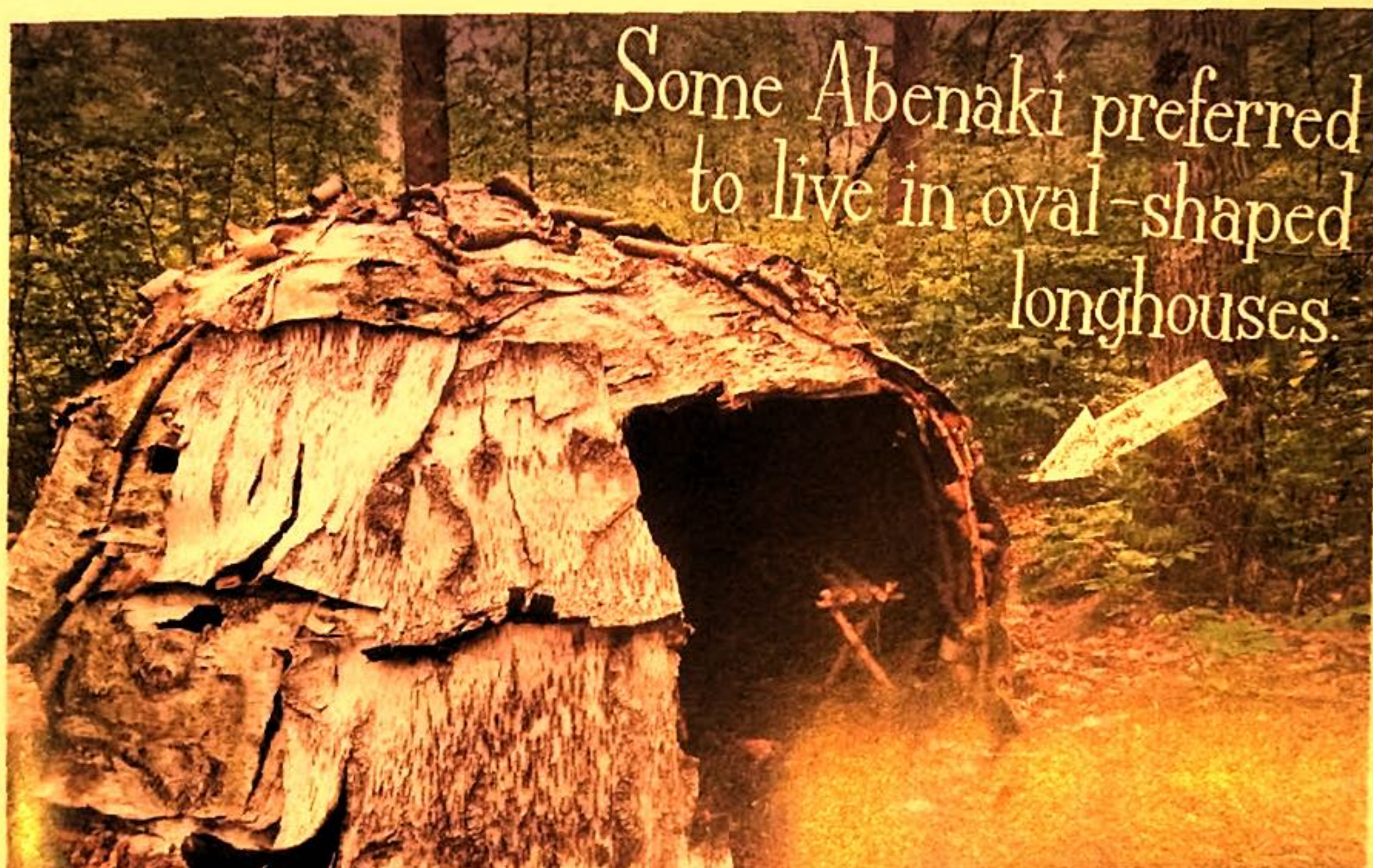


Wild blueberries were gathered for food throughout New Hampshire.

Wigwams

An Abenaki family and close relatives lived in a cone-shaped house called a wigwam. Builders used the trunks of young trees to create a wigwam frame. They covered the frame in mats made of tree bark and animal skins. They left a hole in the ceiling for smoke from their fires to escape. The inside walls were lined with deerskins or bearskins for added warmth during the winter.

Wigwams could be built and taken down quickly.





QUEBEC

Area enlarged
Original 13 Colonies



MAINE
(PART OF MASSACHUSETTS)

VERMONT
(CLAIMED BY
NEW HAMPSHIRE
AND NEW YORK)

White Mountains

PENNACOOK

OSSIPEE

Lake Winnepesaukee

WINNIPESAUKEE

NEW HAMPSHIRE

POCUMTUCK

Connecticut River

Merrimack River

Hanover

Dover

Exeter

Hampton

Londonderry

New Ipswich

Portsmouth
(Strawberry Point)

Piscataqua

Pannaway Plantation

MASSACHUSETTS

- Colonial boundaries
- Present boundaries

0 miles 25
0 km 25

ATLANTIC


The Europeans

Fishing boats from Europe began crossing the Atlantic Ocean to North America in the 1500s. No record exists that any ships explored inside New Hampshire until English trader Martin Pring sailed up the Piscataqua River in 1603. Pring and his men found "goodly groves and woods" on the riverbanks. They did not find the leaves and roots of sassafras trees that Pring hoped to sell as medicine in England.

Though long settled by Native Americans, Europe considered North America a "New World," untouched and without owners.

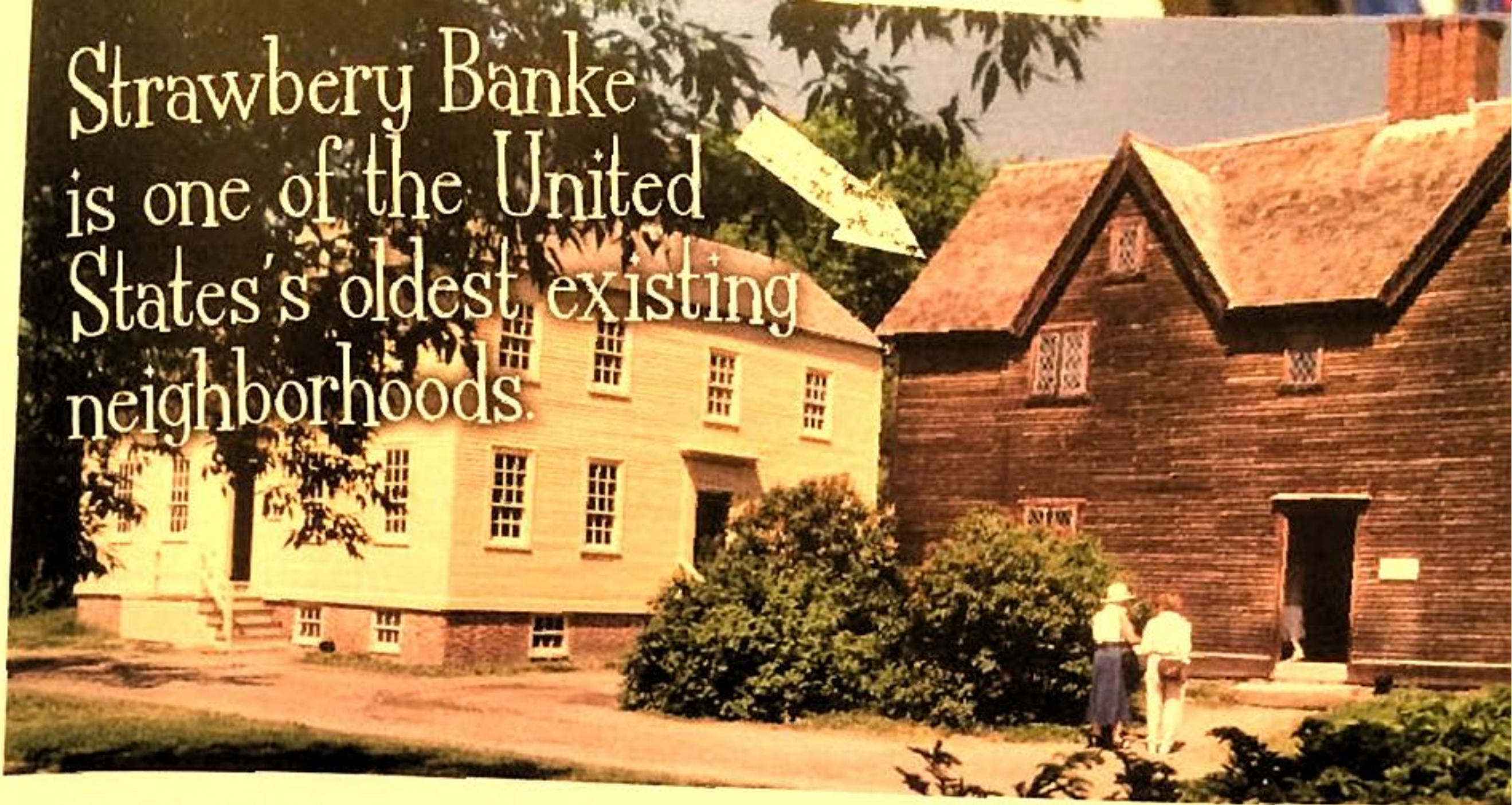
First Settlements

The king of England gave pharmacist David Thompson a land grant of 6,000 acres (2,400 hectares) on the Piscataqua River in 1623. Thompson and 20 other men constructed a building to live in. They built another structure for trading with the Abenaki. Thompson's farm was named Pannaway Plantation. It soon made money shipping dried fish to England. Pannaway failed after Thompson left. But the towns of Portsmouth and Rye sprang up nearby.



The area around Piscataqua River was one of the first in New Hampshire to be settled by Europeans.

Strawbery Banke
is one of the United
States's oldest existing
neighborhoods.



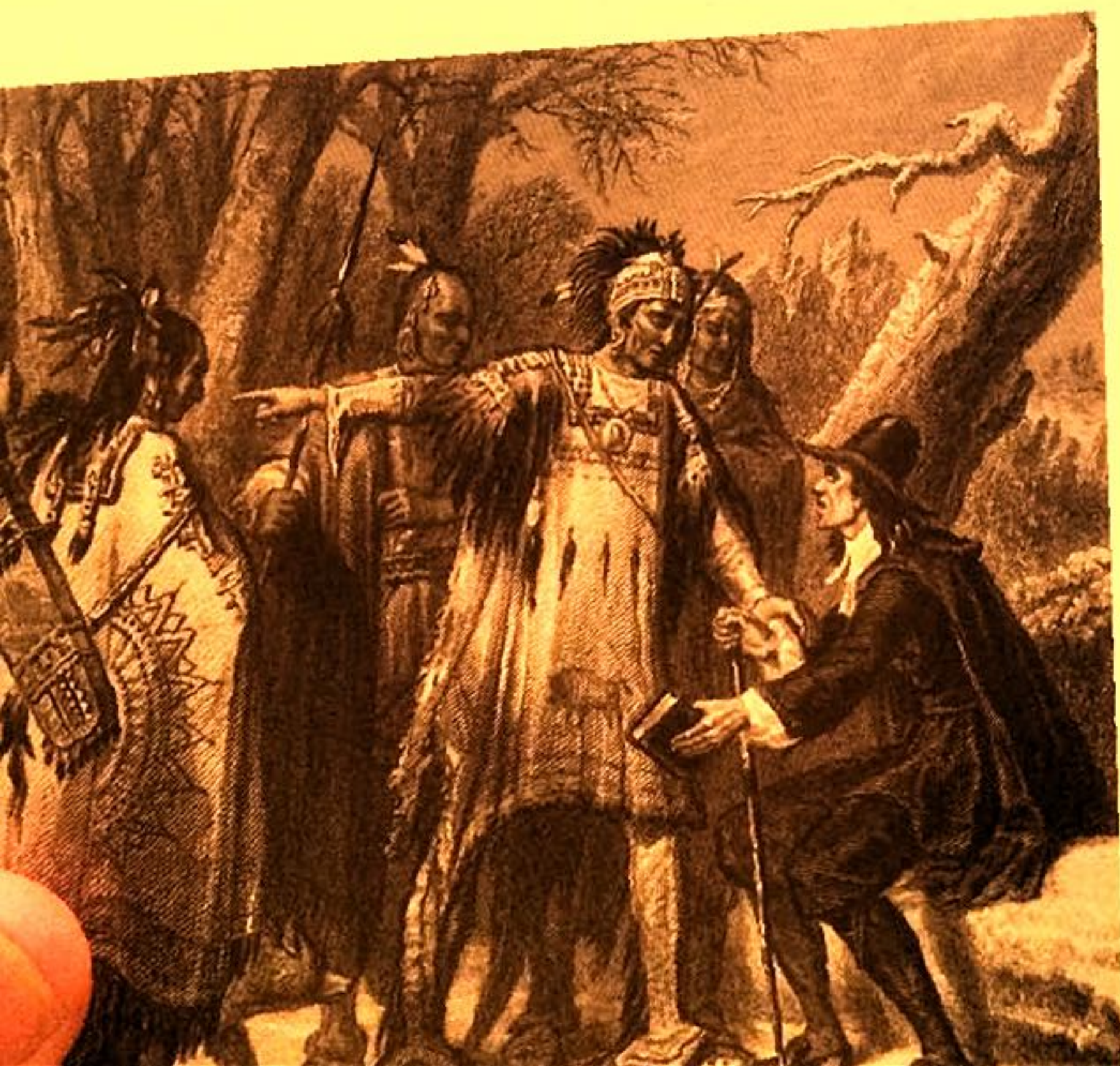
Today, the **Sherburne (left) and Lowd (right) Houses at Strawbery Banke display traditional crafts.**

Mason's Colony

Businessman John Mason founded a colony on a land grant located between the Piscataqua and Merrimack Rivers in 1630. Mason was not a settler. He was an **investor**. His first settlement was called Strawbery Banke. It was a business. Mason bought supplies and built houses for colonists. They gave him a share of the money they made selling dried fish. Mason named his colony New Hampshire, after his home county of Hampshire, England.

The Exchange

At first, the Abenaki taught settlers farming, canoe building, and other skills. The English traded guns, glass, and pots and axes made of iron for furs. But the exchange took a tragic turn early on. European diseases such as **smallpox** spread among native peoples starting in 1616. More than 10,000 Abenaki had lived on the land in 1600. The number was down to 1,200 by 1700.




Many native groups around New Hampshire helped settlers when Europeans first arrived.



Colony Life

The first years in the wilderness left settlers little time for anything but the struggle to survive. Settlers often had to start making a shelter the day they arrived. New Hampshire's thick forests provided logs for log cabins. Sturdy and warm houses built of brick had become common in major settlements by the 1700s. People living in smaller towns or on the **frontier** continued living in log homes.



Settlers with wives in the old country usually sent for them after a house and property were established.

Working Life

Work filled a colonist's day. Women were responsible for the home. They cooked and cleaned. They also mended clothes and spun wool and flax. Meals sometimes included traditional Abenaki favorites such as succotash (corn and lima beans) and corn bread. Women made soap and candles and tended the gardens next to their houses. Women met together at church or quilting bees. Quilting bees were gatherings where local women sewed blankets while exchanging news.



Colonial women did most of their cooking in or near a large fireplace.

The village blacksmith
often was also
the dentist.

**Blacksmiths hammered
horseshoes, nails,
and other objects into
shape by hand.**



Both single and married men might work in one of many jobs. The lumber and fishing trades always endured. Farming had become more important in rural areas by the 1700s. Specialties such as blacksmithing and tanning (leather making) provided a good living in towns. Boys wanting to learn a trade served as **apprentices**. Apprentices learned everything necessary to go into business on their own.



In a one-room schoolhouse, students of all ages and levels learned together.

Getting Schooled

The colony's leaders passed a law around 1647 that a town of 50 or more houses had to have a school. Schools usually only had one room. Older students worked at simple tables with the younger students behind them. Everyone sat on wooden planks. The students were closely watched by a male teacher from his desk in the middle of the room.

Girls seldom received an education beyond reading, writing, and a little math. Some boys from wealthy families learned Greek and Latin to prepare for college in England or at Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Many children, especially those outside the towns, had only a little education. The boys helped with whatever their fathers did for a living. The girls learned to sew and cook.

Some girls were married as young as 13 or 14.

Girls learned skills at home by helping their mothers.

